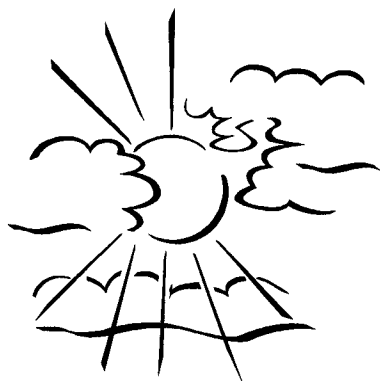


***Department  
of  
Human  
Services***

Prepared by the  
DHS Office of  
Communications  
(517) 373-7394



\*Important story at this spot

# **Articles in Today's Clips**

## **Friday, April 21, 2006**

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

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## **Ricky's relatives oppose lawyer's efforts**

# **Attorney wants to collect funds for boy's burial**

By Kevin Grasha  
Lansing State Journal

Published April 21, 2006

The attorney who wants to set up a fund to collect money for Ricky Holland's burial said Thursday he will wait to file a petition to become the slain 7-year-old's personal representative.

Tim Holland's family members were angered that Tom Walsh, a public administrator for Ingham County, would apply to represent Ricky without talking to anyone from the family.

Tim and Lisa Holland, Ricky's adoptive parents, are charged with killing their son.

Walsh said he spoke with Tim Holland's mother on Thursday, who indicated she wanted to pay for the funeral.

"I want to try and reach an agreement with the family regarding burial," Walsh said, adding he also wants to set up a fund for Ricky's four brothers and sisters.

Mike Nichols, Lisa Holland's co-counsel, said Walsh's request was yet another twist in a case that seems to exist in a universe of its own.

"Here we have an attorney doing something in a case when that attorney is not even involved in the case," Nichols said.

The Hollands are scheduled to stand trial for Ricky's 2005 slaying. They have accused each other of killing him.

Nichols said Ricky's remains are evidence and need to be preserved.

He added he understands the community's need for closure in the form of a burial, "but we're not going to get that closure at least until we have a criminal trial - and we're a long way from getting to that point."

Rodney Weston, a State Journal editorial assistant and writer, speaking for Tim Holland's family,

said they would prefer people such as Walsh don't get involved in the case.

"We're going through enough already," said Weston, who is Tim Holland's nephew.

Tim Holland's family has requested Ricky's remains for burial, but prosecutors have said they will not release them until the trial is over.

The state has temporary custody of the Hollands' four young children; they were placed with Tim Holland's sisters. A final decision regarding custody likely will not be made until the legal case against the Hollands ends.

Tim Holland's attorney, Frank Reynolds, said there would have to be a court hearing to decide whether the remains could be turned over to Walsh.

"This is not something that takes place automatically," he said.

Walsh, a state-appointed official who represents a deceased person when no one else comes forward, indicated that he wasn't expecting this kind of reaction.

"This is getting more complicated as I go along," Walsh said, adding he hasn't yet given up.

Contact Kevin Grasha at 267-1347 or [kgrasha@lsj.com](mailto:kgrasha@lsj.com).

# Child abuse on rise in county

Friday, April 21, 2006

By Susan J. Demas  
sdemas@citpat.com -- 768-4927

Child abuse rates in Jackson County have more than doubled since 2000, making it one of the worst 15 counties in Michigan, a state Department of Human Services report shows.

The data released Thursday is underscored by a pair of sexual abuse cases over the last two months involving two Jackson-area 5-year-old girls.

"These are shocking and horrible cases and we all feel sick about them," said Susan K. Sharkey, executive director of the Jackson-based Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.

About one in 50 kids is abused or neglected in the county, compared to about one in 85 children statewide. Jackson ranks 69th of 83 counties in per-capita rates of child endangerment.

There were 777 confirmed victims last year in the county, a sharp jump from 365 in 2000. The number of cases in 2005 was on par with 789 in 2004, but officials expect the number to rise with the continued economic downturn.

"We've seen an increase in things that cause stressors in parents," Sharkey said.

Unemployment, underemployment and low education levels are common problems linked to child abuse.

Drug abuse, domestic violence and lack of extended family nearby also are factors, Sharkey said.

Forty percent, or 311, are failure-to-protect cases, when a parent is aware of abuse and fails to act against it. That's double the state average.

Those situations usually coincide with a domestic violence situation, such as when a father abuses both the mother and children, Sharkey said.

"Many of these children have lived through so much trauma for years and it scars them," she said. "Then they become intergenerational ineffective parents."

To break the cycle of violence, the nonprofit council is stressing preventative measures during Child Abuse Prevention Month in April.

Operating under a \$217,000 annual budget, the agency offers community education, nurturing parent programs, youth truancy intervention and supervised parental visits with children at its Child and Parent Center, 606 Greenwood Place.

High-profile cases -- like the alleged abuse and slaying of 7-year-old Ricky Holland of Williamston last July -- can help raise awareness of the growing problem, Sharkey said.

Whenever a child abuse case is splashed in the news, the Department of Human Services office is flooded with calls, Executive Director Tanda Reynolds said. Better reporting is one reason for higher child abuse rates, she noted.

"People tend not to want to get in somebody's business," said state DHS spokeswoman Maureen Sorbet. "But I think the public has a better understanding that they need to let the department know about (abuse)."

The department has recently come under fire for its handling of child abuse incidents, especially the Holland case. The state Office of Children's Ombudsman found that in 65 percent of its investigations, DHS caseworkers don't comply with policies or law.

Reynolds said Jackson County DHS employees are striving to improve, but are trying to do more with less. The Child Protective Services division has been slashed from 41 workers in 2005 to 37 this year, she said.

## **Police: Baby Fell 70 Feet From Apartment Window**

### ***Residents Say Window Screens Are Faulty***

POSTED: 5:09 pm EDT April 20, 2006

ClickOnDetroit

Police are investigating the baby that fell seven floors to his death on Thursday.

Saviour Allah, only 16 months old, was at home at the North Park Place Apartments in Southfield playing with his 7-year-old brother, Local 4 reported.

The brother told police he was playing with the baby and then left the room. When he returned the window was open and the baby was nowhere to be seen. Saviour, who police believe pushed the screen out of the seventh-floor window, fell 70 feet to his death.

Police believe the mother of the baby was not at home at the time of the accident, but in another apartment with her boyfriend.

Residents of the apartment building said they have been dealing with loose-fitting screens for years, and that the accident is the fault of the apartments management company.

Attempts to reach the management company were unsuccessful.

Police and child protection services are investigating.

April 21, 2006

## **16-month-old dies after 7-story fall**

**SOUTHFIELD** - A 16-month-old boy died after falling from the seventh-story window of a an apartment building Thursday, police said.

Southfield police and paramedics were called to the North Park Apartments near 9 Mile Road at about 10 a.m. on a call that the child had fallen out of the window and onto the parking lot. The baby was pronounced dead at the scene.

Harris said the boy's 7-year-old brother told police he had seen the baby near the open window, then walked out of the room and when he came back the baby was gone. Harris said it's unclear where their parents were at the time.

"People should always remember to keep their windows shut when they have small children," Fire Capt. Bill Johns said.

# Police investigating Monroe baby's death

Monroe News

story updated April 21. 2006 11:57AM

Monroe police have opened an investigation into the death of a toddler who was rushed to the hospital Thursday morning after the father called 911 for help.

The Monroe Fire Department rushed the 15-month-old girl to Mercy Memorial Hospital from the father's home in the 800 block of Hubble St.

Officials reported the call came in about 9:30 a.m. regarding a toddler who was unresponsive. A police report said the girl had an abrasion on her face.

An autopsy was scheduled for today.



## Police Say Dad Tried To Sell Infant Daughter

POSTED: 7:35 am EDT April 21, 2006

ClickOnDetroit

**GRAND CHUTE, Wis. --** A Wisconsin man is in jail after police accused him of trying to sell his 18-month-old daughter. The couple solicited to buy the baby helped lead police to the 37-year-old Green Bay man, who hoped to pocket \$6,000 to \$8,000. Police in Grand Chute said the man was arrested Wednesday night following a three-day investigation. District Attorney Carrie Schneider said the man will likely face charges of child neglect and unauthorized placement for adoption. The child was taken into custody by the county Department of Human Services. Grand Chute police Officer Aaron Schellinger said the allegation was reported to Appleton, Wis., police Monday by mutual friends. He said Grand Chute police got the case because the person who was going to buy the child lived there. He said the child's mother is in Milwaukee.

*Copyright 2006 by The Associated Press.*

# **Mother's custody effort extended**

Friday, April 21, 2006

The Grand Rapids Press

GRAND RAPIDS -- A mother whose 6-year-old son accidentally shot and injured his little sister in August was given three more months to prove why she should not lose parental rights. Susana Pagan, 26, is making "marginal" progress through parenting classes but apparently still has a relationship with the alleged drug dealer whose gun was left loaded in their West Side home, a caseworker testified Thursday in Kent County Family Court. The girl, Shania, 4, who was shot in the leg and arm, is expected to fully recover. She and her brother, Steven, are in the custody of their father in the Muskegon area and doing well, the caseworker testified. Their older sister, Shanin, 9, is living with her grandmother.

# **Child-abuse sentence fell short of maximum**

Jackson Citizen Patriot Letters

April 21, 2006

JACKSON -- This is in regard to the April 8 article in the paper on the sentencing of William Trainer for a child-abuse case. The girl, now 5, broke a Christmas toy and was punished with two black eyes, purple bruises on the face and redness on her buttocks. Trainer was punished by Judge Charles Nelson to three years probation and time served of 98 days.

This was a slap on the wrist by Judge Nelson for a very serious offense. The girl was lucky that she was not more severely injured. Although Judge Nelson sentenced within the "guidelines," we need to demand that our justice system punish offenders of child abuse by using the maximum sentencing guidelines. These guidelines also need to be more severe to have the punishment meet the seriousness of the crime.

When we fail to protect our children from the evils of child abuse from an adult, then society, through the justice system, need to demand that those convicted serve the maximum sentence. Our children are our most valuable asset and they need to be protected against those who will harm them. How many more deaths or severe injuries to children in Jackson County do we need to read about before we hold the abusers accountable for their actions and judges accountable for the sentences that they give out?

I implore everyone to look at the general election for judges this year and know where the candidates stand on protecting our children and then vote for the candidates who will best serve our children and community.

-- Don Mathis

# **Working to end child abuse**

## **Council offers support to stressed parents**

Friday, April 21, 2006

BY LISA CAROLIN  
News Staff Reporter

The rate of child abuse in Livingston County has more than doubled between 1995 and 2004.

In 1995, 1.9 out of every thousand children were victims of abuse or neglect, a total of 62 children. In 2004, the rate had increased to 4.9 out of every thousand children for a total of 220 children. Those numbers represent the number of children who were confirmed as being victims of abuse or neglect through investigations performed by Child Protective Services.

"We are living in an increasingly stressful society," says Deanna Norris, program director for the Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Council of Livingston County.

"When parents are stressed, kids suffer," she says. "One of the challenges facing people in Livingston County as a growing county, is that people move here away from friends and relatives and don't have the support system here of established friends and relatives. Stay-at-home moms can feel especially isolated and alone."

Norris says that despite the growing rate of child abuse in the county, Livingston County has the third-lowest rate of child abuse in Michigan.

"There are a lot of financial and employment stresses facing people in this state," says Norris. "The economy plays a huge role."

Norris says that thanks to computers, people are less social than they used to be, which can add to the feeling of isolation. She says there is a correlation between child abuse and juvenile crime because youths who are abused are more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol, and are also more likely to abuse their own children. She says child abuse has a lifelong impact.

The CAP Council's primary focus is to prevent child abuse through education and awareness. The Council offers classes to new moms to teach them how to calm babies and themselves. The CAP Council works in all the county's school districts teaching middle school and high school students about shaken baby syndrome and the lifelong complications from fetal alcohol syndrome, and teaches elementary-level students what sexual abuse is and how to say no.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, and the CAP Council is encouraging people to tie blue ribbons around a tree or car antenna because it is a nationally recognized symbol of child abuse prevention.

"The most important bit of advice we can offer is don't be afraid to get involved," says Norris. "If you have reason to believe that a child might be at risk for harm, call Child Protective Services."

They can be reached at 800-342-3720. Parents who feel overly stressed and fear that they might hurt their child can call the 24-hour National Child Abuse Hotline at 800-4-A-CHILD.

The CAP Council will have a fundraiser on May 23 to support its prevention efforts.

Lisa Carolin can be reached at [lcarolin@livingstoncommunitynews.com](mailto:lcarolin@livingstoncommunitynews.com) or at 810-844-2010.

# **Man on trial for secret videos**

## **He's accused of turning tapes of girlfriend's daughter into porn images**

PUBLISHED: April 21, 2006

By Jameson Cook  
Macomb Daily Staff Writer

A 47-year-old Warren man is on trial this week, accused of secretly videotaping his girlfriend's daughter and editing the images to make them pornographic.

Charles Quatrine Jr., a one-time Elvis impersonator, is charged with production of child abusive material on a computer, possession of child pornography and eavesdropping for allegedly videotaping the girl in various stages of undress in her bedroom without her knowledge.

Testimony began Thursday in the jury trial in front of Judge Mary Chrzanowski in Macomb Circuit Court, and is expected to continue today and next week.

Prosecutors say Quatrine allegedly filmed the girl, now 14, for about three years when she was 10 to 12 ending in December 2004 in the rented home on Frahzo Road. He allegedly turned hours of filming into dozens of erotic video snippets and turned photographic frames into a collage, all kept on his computer. Quatrine also allegedly possessed other child pornographic material on his computer.

Quatrine hid a small camera in an otherwise hollow satellite or cable television box on the top of the girl's TV, with the only wires connecting to Quatrine's computer, according to assistant Macomb prosecutor William Cataldo.

Cataldo said there is no evidence the images were seen by anyone else, or transferred or sold to anyone else.

The videos were discovered on Quatrine's computer in December 2004 by Quatrine's 17-year-old son, Corey, who testified Thursday that he inadvertently found one of the files and opened it. He could not view the others because they were protected from entry by a secret password. But Corey Quatrine downloaded all of the images and turned them over to a police officer assigned to his high school, Warren Mott.

The Macomb Area Computer Enforcement Team was called in to investigate further, finding about 55 images in all, Cataldo said.

The most serious charge against Quatrine, multiple counts of production of the child sexually abusive material, carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison. The

possession carries a maximum penalty of four years and the eavesdropping charge carries a maximum penalty of two years.

Quatrone, who had been in the Macomb County Jail since at least last summer, was released early this month after his bond was lowered by the judge to \$50,000, and he posted 10 percent.

Part of the case was appealed by the prosecution to the state Court of Appeals, which ruled in favor of the prosecution, although in a limited way. Prosecutors wanted to introduce evidence showing that Quatrone also maintained homo-erotic video imagery -- including him engaged in acts with another man -- in password-protected form on his computer. Judge Chrzanowski ruled against it, and an appeals panel upheld that the prosecution can mention that Quatrone maintained his images in the protected folders but cannot reveal the nature of the images.

Quatrone also was found not guilty in November 1997 of two counts of first-degree criminal sexual conduct, accused of engaging in oral sex with the 13-year-old daughter of his wife, who is now his ex-wife, in Sterling Heights.

He sued the city of Sterling Heights, its police department and a police officer, claiming misuse of authority in charging him with the crimes. But the case was dismissed by Macomb Circuit Judge Deborah Servitto.

# Man arraigned in connection with Midland hostage situation

Kelly Nankervis, Midland Daily News

04/21/2006

The man accused of holding his girlfriend at knifepoint Monday night has been arraigned on charges stemming from the incident.

Midland County Prosecutor Michael Carpenter on Thursday afternoon authorized charges of kidnapping, felonious assault and telephone cut or wire tap against Jason Thomas Traver, 34.

Traver was arraigned before Midland County District Court Judge Robert L. Donoghue, who denied bond in the case. Traver requested a court-appointed attorney. No future court dates have been set.

He was arrested after a standoff with Midland Police and the Special Weapons and Tactics team that lasted about two hours on Monday night. At the scene, it was said that he was holding his girlfriend at knifepoint. A media release from police stated the man demanded to speak to a police negotiator in a call to 911.

In an e-mail response to the story, Jackie Redmond, Traver's girlfriend, stated she was not held hostage at knifepoint and there was no argument between the two of them. She said that Traver had a "previous situation involving the police and court system that was upsetting and depressing him terribly and he wanted the chance to make a statement and be heard."

Traver was booked that night on the felony charge of failing to pay child support, on which he was arraigned Tuesday before District Court Judge John H. Hart. Bond was set at 10 percent of \$1 million. Carpenter said the high bond allowed his office the necessary time to review the facts pertaining to the hostage situation and determine appropriate charges.

Kidnapping is a felony with a maximum penalty of life in prison, felonious assault is punishable by up to four years in prison and fine up to \$2,000, and telephone cut or wire tap is punishable by up to two years in prison and a fine up to \$1,000.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*Thursday, April 20, 2006 4:59 PM EDT*

### **Reduce domestic violence**

To the Editor:

Recently there were three letters in the "Dear Abby" column regarding domestic violence. We were glad to see them because it is important that people become more aware and more open to the reality of domestic violence. Domestic violence is incredibly destructive to the victims including any children in the household. The entire community suffers with every act of domestic violence. The American Medical Association reports that family violence costs the nation from \$5 billion to \$10 billion annually in medical expenses, police and court cost, shelters and foster care, sick leave, absenteeism, and lack of productivity. In 2005, Lenawee County had 472 domestic violence-related arrests. We must recognize domestic violence as a tragic reality in our community.

Work is being done to address the problem. The Lenawee County Domestic Violence Task Force was formed 13 years ago to study and implement potential strategies to reduce intimate partner violence. It is critical for the public to be fully informed about the dynamics of domestic violence and how it impacts families and communities.

The Task Force has formed the Community Awareness sub-committee. The purpose of the sub-committee is to raise awareness by providing education and resources regarding domestic violence in the Lenawee County community. The sub-committee had a resource / information table at the Lenawee County Fair and has made presentations to service clubs, churches and schools. In the near future, the Community Awareness sub-committee will have billboards posted in the area with domestic violence-related information.

There is still much to be done. The Task Force and the sub-committee will continue to work to reduce domestic violence, in part by raising awareness, providing education and resources, and encouraging individuals and businesses to become involved. Please show your support and help STOP Domestic Violence NOW!

Joyce E. Faulhaber

Lenawee County Domestic Violence Task Force

Michigan Report

April 20, 2006

## **COMMUNITY HEALTH TRYING TO RECOVER MEDICAID FUNDS**

The Department of Community Health received praise Thursday for its efforts to recover Medicaid funds paid for prescription drugs that potentially should have been covered by Medicare or private insurance companies.

A recent audit of the state's Medicaid prescription drug system showed \$15.2 million in definite overpayments and \$39.9 million in potential overpayments. Community Health officials said they were making efforts to both collect from Medicare and private insurers amounts those entities should have paid and to prevent future charges to Medicaid when another entity should pay the bill.

Rep. Bruce Caswell (R-Hillsdale), chair of the House Appropriations Community Health Subcommittee, praised both the auditors for highlighting the issue and the department for taking steps to correct it.

"That's a rare item up here in Lansing that you had some mess ups and you're trying to correct them," he said.

But he also urged auditors to return to the department next year to be sure the changes it and its pharmacy benefits manager, First Health, had made are working.

Most of the problems stemmed from systems developed by First Health that were allowing pharmacies to bill Medicaid when another payer should be billed first. Community Health officials said the systems had been changed to require more proof that a claim had been rejected by Medicare or a private insurer, where appropriate, before Medicaid will accept the bill.

And they said Medicare had waived its billing deadlines to allow some of the back accounts, some as far back as 2000, to be resubmitted.

Committee members urged the department to seek reimbursement from First Health and from the pharmacies where appropriate. Of note were cases where pharmacies had entered no or low reimbursements from private insurers to have the Medicaid system accept and pay the claims.

Officials said the issue in those cases had been training for the pharmacies and that the problems had been addressed. They said coming requirements that insurance companies submit lists of their insureds to be matched against

Medicaid records also would be helpful by ensuring the records provided to the pharmacies on who to bill first are accurate.

Committee members also raised concerns about the complexity of the system for pharmacies, noting that in some cases multiple private insurers would have to be billed before the state could be billed.

“I don’t know that there are other steps we can take, but we will be exploring that with the providers,” said Sue Moran, administrator of the Bureau of Medicaid Operations.

# Attorney general joins Dubay battle

Thursday, April 20, 2006

DARRYL Q. TUCKER  
THE SAGINAW NEWS

State Attorney General Mike Cox is joining Saginaw County Prosecutor Michael D. Thomas and Lauren Wells in seeking dismissal of a lawsuit Wells' former boyfriend filed to avoid paying child support.

Cox, Thomas and Wells' attorney, Larry W. "Bill" Smith, announced during a Wednesday news conference in Saginaw that they have filed a motion in U.S. District Court in Bay City asking Judge David M. Lawson to dismiss the suit Matt Dubay filed.

Wells and Dubay have a 9-month-old daughter, Elisabeth. The Saginaw Township mother is a college student who works for a wireless phone company.

"One of the responsibilities of my office is to defend the constitutionality of state laws," Cox said. "Mr. Dubay chose to sue only the Saginaw County prosecutor and not the state of Michigan to avoid my participation in defense of state law. This approach will not work."

Cox said he expects Lawson to hear his motion in about 30 days.

Dubay's attorney, Jeffery A. Cojocar of Shelby Township, said he has not reviewed the motion by Cox and Thomas.

"I expected and anticipated it," Cojocar said. "It's not out of the ordinary."

The 20-year-old mother has declined interviews but issued statements denouncing the suit and expressing her disappointment in Dubay.

Dubay, a Saginaw Township resident, is a computer technician. He has the support of the National Center for Men, a men's rights organization based in Long Island, N.Y.

Dubay, 25, said he doesn't believe men have any rights whatsoever in childbirth decisions.

He also said he doesn't expect the suit to succeed but wants to spark debate. His suit contends a lack of male reproductive rights violates the U.S. Constitution's equal protection clause.

Dubay's attorneys filed suit in March, claiming that Michigan's paternity law is unconstitutional because the father is compelled to pay child support even if he did not want the child born.

Michigan will not become a state where parents can opt out of support if they don't want a child, Cox said.

"We need to send a message that parents need to take responsibility for their children," he said. "We need to foster our sense of familial and personal responsibility, not making it easier to avoid.

"We also must protect Michigan taxpayers, who too often end up footing the bill for parents who choose not to be responsible for the children they bring into this world."

Chaos would reign if Dubay wins, Cox said.

"Children need both parents to financially support them," he said, adding the state should not foot the bill.

Cojocar disagreed. "This is an issue that needs to be decided on its merits," he said.

Thomas said he is heartened by Cox's intervening to get the suit dismissed. Cox is committed to getting parents to pay child support, he said.

"Every child has a right to be supported," Thomas said.

Smith also welcomed Cox's support.

"We hope it will cause a speedy resolution," he said.

In February, Saginaw County Probate Judge Patrick J. McGraw ordered Dubay to pay \$500 in monthly child support to Wells and their daughter. Court files show that Dubay acknowledged paternity Aug. 24. v

Darryl Q. Tucker covers courts for The Saginaw News. You may reach him at 776-9686.

# Rights vs. responsibilities

Friday, April 21, 2006

Editor, The Saginaw News:

Over the past eight years, I have talked with hundreds of teenagers at the Saginaw County Juvenile Detention Center. After spending approximately 1,000 hours listening to detained teens, it has become obvious that a loving, nurturing relationship between a father and his child is extremely important to the healthy emotional development of a child.

When dads, such as Matt Dubay, choose to pursue and exercise their "rights," a child grows up feeling the intense pain of rejection. They must live with the fact that they have a father who does not value them enough to spend time with them.

This does not mean that a child from a fatherless home is doomed to failure. Granted, some children have overcome dad's absence and become successful. A loving, nurturing mother can tip the scales in favor of a child's success, as can a healthy relationship with a surrogate father.

However, it is far better for a child to have a healthy relationship with their father than to experience this sizable obstacle and then attempt to overcome it.

The following statistics cast a light on those who have not been so successful.

t 70 percent of juveniles in state-operated institutions come from fatherless homes.

t 80 percent of rapists motivated with displaced anger come from fatherless homes.

t 75 percent of all adolescent patients in chemical abuse centers come from fatherless homes.

t 63 percent of youth suicides are from fatherless home.

t 71 percent of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes.

t 85 percent of all children who exhibit behavioral disorders come from fatherless homes.

90 percent of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes.

Considering the escalating gang-related shootings in Saginaw, it is noteworthy that over the past eight years I have not spoken to one juvenile from a complete nuclear family who is a member of a gang.

Before Dubay and other absentee fathers consider their "rights," please take a hard look at the impact the decision will have on a child's life and society. Maybe it is time to forget about "you" and focus on becoming the father your child so desperately needs.

Chaplain Julie A. Paul

president,

Forgotten Youth Ministries

Saginaw Township

# ROCHELLE RILEY: Numbers tell youths' needs

*April 21, 2006*

**BY ROCHELLE RILEY**  
FREE PRESS COLUMNIST

To understand the challenges faced by youth who grow too old for foster care, look at the numbers.

More than 49% who aged out in 2002 and 2003 in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties were homeless at some point during their first three years on their own; 25.4% were homeless immediately after aging out.

Thirty-six percent had to return to the homes they were originally moved from; 16.7% lived on the streets, in cars or in abandoned buildings; and 15% were homeless at the time they were interviewed for Michigan's first-ever look at the lives former foster youth lead.

Wayne State University's Research Group on Homelessness and Poverty examined -- for no fee -- housing, employment, risky behavior, mental health and criminal activity for the youth.

In Michigan, with few exceptions, foster youth stop receiving aid at 18. Between 400 and 500 youth age out every year.

## **Troubling results**

The study, presented Thursday to a state task force studying how to improve transitions, defined homelessness as having no home or living in precarious housing, which researcher Patrick Fowler said meant "sleeping on someone's couch" or returning to parents they were separated from initially.

The study found that:

- **On education:** 43% of the youth were high school dropouts, 21% had spent at least a year in college, 20% were high school graduates, and 16% had earned their GED. "Youth who did not receive their high school degree reported more psychological distress and risky sexual behavior and personal victimization and had longer durations of homelessness after exiting foster care," Fowler said
- **On employment:** The youth were unemployed for 48% of their time since aging out, 48% received some public assistance, 40% worked in the fast food industry, and 14.4% had not worked. The youths' median income was \$598.33 per month.
- 37.1% had children of their own.

## **Grown-up problems**

The pathos behind the numbers is clear: Youth who were in the system longer, who were placed multiple times in multiple homes and schools, who couldn't find jobs or homes had higher levels of distress, compulsive behavior, anxiety and phobias than other children from low-income families, Fowler said.

But here is the bigger problem: Those youth become parents and parts of communities where they have an impact. If they've had no guidance, no



counseling, no training to help determine that impact -- well, we get who we care for.

"Clearly, we know that the outcomes for kids who have been through the foster care system, especially older kids, are not that great," DHS director Marianne Udow said. "We want to do everything we can to change that picture."

Udow said the state plans future surveys of a population it has not monitored before.

Let's hope so. In a state that is losing young people like water, this is a population we must save.

***ROCHELLE RILEY'S*** columns are published on the Sunday Voices page and the Wednesday and Friday Other Voices page. Contact her at [rriley99@freepress.com](mailto:rriley99@freepress.com) or 313-223-4473.

Adrian Daily Telegram

April 20, 2006

## **Thanks for warm help**

To the Editor:

Members of Share-the-Warmth, a coalition of people from several churches and agencies in the city, would like to thank all those who gave of their time to serve as hosts, do laundry, furnish snacks or provide financial help for Adrian's overnight shelter, which was open for three months this past winter. Everyone's generosity and support has been deeply appreciated by both the hosts and guests.

We also wish to publicly thank Mike Cook of The Daily Bread who, along with others, provided a wonderful hot breakfast each morning at 7 a.m. for our guests.

Very special and heartfelt thanks to Pastor Joel Sarrault and the members of St. John's Lutheran Church, who graciously allowed Share-the-Warmth the use of their space each evening. The heated gym and adjoining kitchen provided ample room and a centrally-located safe environment, especially appreciated on the bitter nights of winter.

Again, to all involved in any way, the committee is deeply grateful.

Pat Schnapp

Adrian

# **Seniors warned about scammers seeking money**

By: Charles Slat story updated April 21. 2006 11:51AM

Chuck and Carolyn Caulk of New Boston already have a paper shredder, but they intend to start using it more.

"I'm going to start shredding all the credit card applications I get in the mail," Mrs. Caulk said after attending a two-hour session on scams against seniors at Monroe County Community College Thursday.

The Caulks were among about two dozen seniors who got tips on how to dodge scams from Richard T. Eppstein, president of the Better Business Bureau of Northwestern Ohio and Southeastern Michigan.

Posted: 4-21-2006

## **Asparagus near ready for picking**

**Migrant workers not yet here to help**



By BRIAN MULHERIN

Ludingtonj Daily News Staff Writer

RIVERTON TWP. — Asparagus season is here — or it soon will be.

But not many pickers have returned to the area yet, putting fresh-market farmers in a tough position, and keeping local asparagus from store shelves for a little while longer.

The season — from late April/early May through mid-June — is about on schedule. The issue for some right now is just when to have migrant workers come north to begin picking.

“You hate to have them come and sit for a week or two,” said grower Bill Schwass. He noted that frost is still possible for the next few weeks.

“We don’t figure on picking until the middle of next week,” Schwass said. “When you see those first spears, it doesn’t pay to go out and get those because you never get enough.”

Pete Christensen of Riverton Township placed an ad for pickers in the Ludington Daily News on Thursday because his asparagus is just days away from being ready. Several stalks stretched up to eight or 10 inches high on his farm Thursday.

“I could be picking by Saturday,” he said.

Christensen said he believes many farmers are facing similar issues.

“I know a lot of growers in Oceana County having problems getting pickers,” Christensen said.

Harriet Shafer of Eden Township said the farm her sons John and Jim run has a full complement of workers returning and her family is working to prepare guest housing.

But between the Ludington Daily News and Oceana's Herald-Journal, five farms are advertising for asparagus pickers.

"If guys don't have any guest workers, we're really going to be in trouble," Christensen said, referring to the debate in Washington, D.C., on immigration.

Schwass said part of the problem fresh market farmers and asparagus-only farmers face is that they're not diversified, so they can't offer workers a long enough season for those workers can qualify for unemployment.

Schwass said although most field workers are in town yet, that's par for the course, because the processors don't have workers yet, either. He said he'll keep his fields level mechanically — with a mower.

The workers will arrive eventually, Schwass said, but there are other problems on the horizon. He said two loads of fertilizer cost him \$6,000. On top of that, he didn't buy his gas for the season in advance as he's done in the past because the prices were too high. Now he'll be paying what the market demands all season.

The price being offered by major processors is up to 59 cents a pound from last year's beginning-of-season price of 45 cents, and Schwass predicted that it could be higher quickly.

"If we get an early frost, we'll see 60-cent asparagus within two or three weeks," he said.

# Decision delayed on Habitat project

Friday, April 21, 2006

By Rick Wilson  
The Grand Rapids Press

GRAND RAPIDS -- Habitat for Humanity and a group of Southeast Side residents concerned about a low-income residential development being proposed in their neighborhood will have to wait another month to find out whether the project will go forward.

The Grand Rapids Board of Zoning Appeals on Thursday tabled an appeal by Habitat for Humanity of Kent County of last month's Planning Commission decision, which denied a rezoning request for a 22-unit condominium development near Kalamazoo Avenue and 28th Street SE.

Board members said they wanted to take more time to scrutinize the project. They are slated to reconsider the matter May 18.

It was tough for both sides to get a read on what the board's final decision may be. Chairman Ed Kettle clearly had questions about allowing the proposed development to move forward.

"Every other week we tell people they can't plop down a house in a neighborhood because it doesn't fit with the character of the neighborhood," Kettle said. "How does this fit with the character of this neighborhood?"

Habitat wants to build the condominiums in hopes of providing low-income housing for single parents or grandparents caring for children, said the group's executive director, Pam Doty-Nation.

But neighbors such as Lisa Hovinga worry the development will tax streets and dangerously increase traffic in the neighborhood.

Neighbors, about 20 of whom attended Thursday's meeting, also noted that Joe Takens -- who donated 4.6 acres for the project at the end of Dawes Avenue SE -- did so on the condition he will profit from the sale of eight of the condos. Habitat will sell the remaining 14 units to people who qualify under its guidelines.

# Kids in Detroit to get a helping hand

## Grants to aid neighborhoods

*April 21, 2006*

BY JACK KRESNAK  
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

The Skillman Foundation will take a significant step forward Saturday in a 10-year effort to improve the lives of children in six Detroit neighborhoods.

The foundation, a private philanthropy that has been making grants to help youngsters in the region since 1960, is to announce a few planning grants of between \$6,000 and \$60,000 to organizations in the Vernor neighborhood of southwest Detroit, said Tonya Allen, program director for the Good Neighborhoods Initiative at the Skillman Foundation.

"On Saturday, we're celebrating the fact that this community in southwest Detroit has come together consistently and has worked over a series of three or four months to develop an agenda for children," Allen said. "The community said, 'This is what we want for our kids, and this is what we want to work towards.' 'It's kind of a kickoff for the real work to begin,'" Allen said.

Organizing work in the five other Detroit neighborhoods -- Chadsey-Condon, Cody-Rouge, Brightmoor, Central and Osborn -- will begin in the coming months. More than 65,000 children live in the six neighborhoods -- a little less than one-third of the city's population of children 18 and younger. About half of those children live in poverty, the foundation said.

After four months of community meetings, participants in the southwest Detroit project chose the goal of providing every child with positive development opportunities in their homes, schools and neighborhoods, Allen said.

In a statement, Skillman President and Chief Executive Officer Carol Goss said: "The residents in southwest Detroit have incredible ambition. We are pleased to be an integral part of improving these neighborhoods."

Saturday's meeting, described as a celebration, will be from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Our Lady Queen of Angels Activity Hall, 4200 Martin. It is free and open to the public.

To learn more about the Skillman initiative, visit the foundation's Web site, [www.skillman.org](http://www.skillman.org) or call 313-393-1185 anytime.

Contact **JACK KRESNAK** at 313-223-4544 or [jkresnak@freepress.com](mailto:jkresnak@freepress.com).

Detroit Free Press

April 21, 2006

## **DETROIT: Ex-worker gets prison for selling ID cards**

A former Michigan Secretary of State employee was sentenced to nine months in prison Thursday for selling state identification cards to people, most of whom had bad driving records.

Kimberly Charise Murray, 32, of Detroit admitted giving fraudulent state identification documents to 8 to 10 people for about \$300 each from December 1995 to August 2005. Murray, who worked at a downtown Detroit branch until she resigned, is among a number of Secretary of State employees arrested for selling fraudulent documents to people with poor driving records and to illegal immigrants.

Federal sentencing guidelines recommended a 6- to 12-month sentence. Her lawyer, Marc Lakin of Birmingham, asked U.S. District Judge Paul Borman to sentence her to probation. Borman decided on 9 months to send a message to other Secretary of State employees.

*By David Ashenfelter*



# State government: \$100K growth club

Friday, April 21, 2006

One of the more shocking tidbits of recent Michigan news is this: The number of state employees whose salary is \$100,000 or more now stands at about 700. What to make of that growing "\$100,000 Club" is a challenge.

First, remember that a rising tide lifts all boats. So, just as another recent news story reported an 8 percent increase last year in the number of millionaires, one should expect all sorts of similar increases. One impact of inflation is to lift all of us from one income bracket to another.

That said, what does this state trend suggest? Six years ago there were 375 state employees with salaries of \$100,000 or more; so the number has almost doubled.

The highest-paid employee, interestingly, is not Gov. Jennifer Granholm. Her \$177,000 salary puts her in the No. 2 spot. No, the top-paid state employee is economic-development director James Epolito, whose salary is \$200,000.

Many higher-paid state employees are doctors, psychiatrists and lawyers in top jobs with the state. Thus, the Department of Community Health, with 141 employees in the "\$100,000 Club," has the highest cluster of such employees. The Attorney General's office is next, with 98.

Average state government salaries increased 16.6 percent over the past six years. That occurred despite wage and benefit concessions that state-employee unions agreed to in budget-balancing steps, and despite the loss of many higher-paid employees who took early-retirement incentives. But during the same period, private-sector pay grew by less than half that rate -- 7.8 percent. That suggests a big problem for Michigan: The expense of government at both state and local levels.

Think about it. When there is talk of GM and Ford going bankrupt, when hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs are being lost, when Michigan ranks near the bottom nationally in terms of economic growth, when the state has a bumper crop of school districts and municipalities in or near insolvency -- is it fitting that the state's \$100,000 Club is growing so rapidly?

Michigan government desperately needs just what GM and Delphi need -- a bath in the cold waters of reality and restraint.

But where are the voices of restraint? Not in the Legislature -- two of whose members (Republican House and Senate leaders) just joined the \$100,000 Club themselves. Remember, Michigan lawmakers are compensated second-highest in the nation. Their base pay of \$79,650, with \$12,000 expense accounts and top-of-the-line health and other benefits, puts them all within view of the golden gate of the \$100,000 Club.

There is a voice of restraint, however. Gov. Granholm believes the chief exec's salary is too high, given Michigan's economic circumstances. She returned 5 percent of her after-tax pay to the state Treasury this year and last, and 10 percent the year before. She even appealed to the State Officers Compensation Commission, which passed a resolution supporting her. The Legislature has done nothing.

If there is to be restraint, it must come from citizens, for the Legislature has a vested interest in continuing this largesse. And if there is to be an agenda of restraint, we are coming rapidly to the conclusion that it must begin with a radical reshaping of the Legislature -- to a part-time, perhaps smaller, body.

--The Jackson Citizen Patriot